



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes

Town Council Committee of the Whole

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Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Mayor Heather Bond Somers, Councilors Dean G. Antipas, Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Rita M. Schmidt, James L. Streeter, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, June 12, 2012

7:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Somers called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson
Members Absent: Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Streeter

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger and Executive Assistant Nicki Bresnayan.

3. Calendar and Communications

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

2012-0168 Approval of Minutes (Committee of the Whole)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council Committee of the Whole meetings of May 22, 2012 and June 5, 2012 are hereby accepted and approved.

A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Flax, to adopt.

The motion carried unanimously

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor Somers stated that a joint meeting with the Board of Education has been scheduled for Thursday, July 12th.

Also, the June 16th special meeting of the Committee of the Whole has been cancelled.

Mayor Somers noted that the Council would like to participate in the July 4th parade.

6. NEW BUSINESS

2011-0218 Fitch High School Baseball Field - Update

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Flax, to enter executive session at 7:12 p.m. to discuss the Fitch High School baseball field agreement, and to invite the Town Manager and Town Attorney Eric Callahan to attend.

The motion carried unanimously

Recommended for a Resolution

Councilor Streeter arrived at 7:25 p.m. and joined the executive session.

The executive session concluded at 7:25 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Streeter and Councilor Watson
Members Absent: Councilor Schmidt

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Antipas, to authorize the Town Manager to sign the amendment to the baseball agreement subject to review and approval by the Board of Education.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 7 - Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson
Abstain: 1 - Councilor Streeter

2012-0169

Introduction of an Ordinance for Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger stated the need to review the size or dollar amount of the bond ordinance. Once the Town Council decides on a number, staff can approach Groton Long Point and the City of Groton about their road projects. Staff has laid out a number of scenarios for the Council's consideration. In response to a question from Councilor O'Beirne, the Town Manager stated that nothing in the bond ordinance would prevent the Town from putting more money into road maintenance in any given year.

Gary Schneider, Director of Public Works, reviewed Scenario #1, a baseline derived from the budgeted funds used in the MACTEC Pavement Management Reports (2008 for Groton Long Point and the City and 2006 for the Town). Those numbers were then adjusted for inflation. Six percent was added to the figures for the City and Groton Long Point for engineering and bidding. Then 20% was added to all three figures incidentals including catch basins, line-striping, traffic control, etc. Twenty percent was subtracted from the Town figure for labor since labor is funded through the budget. The resulting figures were then multiplied by five years. This methodology was used for Scenarios #2, #3 and #4.

Scenario #2 allows the pavement condition to remain above 70 PCI (Pavement Condition Index) during a 10 year analysis period. Scenario #3 would maintain report year pavement conditions. Scenario #4 is the budget recommended to clear the backlog of roads. Under Scenario #4, the Town would have to contract out some of the work.

Mr. Schneider explained that the Town strives to keep its roads above 70 PCI. Since the projects are based on material cost, the number of road miles for each scenario is not static. Councilor Flax asked about the relative cost of road improvements in the City, Groton Long Point, and the Town, and expressed concern with Public Works' ability to oversee the projects.

Mr. Schneider has not been given any cost estimates by the City or Groton Long Point and the Town will not oversee any of the projects in the City or Groton Long Point. In the past, Public Works was used available funds to pave as many roads as possible. In the case of specific projects in the Capital Improvement Program, Public Works has historically returned money to the Capital Reserve Fund. Councilor Flax asked for a referral on the cost of paving a road in the City, Groton Long Point, and the Town. Mr. Schneider noted that the Town has never been asked to bid on projects in the City or Groton Long Point. Mayor Somers suggested that the Town ask for information from the two entities about what costs are included in their figures. Councilor Peruzzotti asked about the costs for engineering and bidding and whether a bond ordinance would overtax Public Works. She feels that more information is needed and some extra oversight might be desirable. Mr. Schneider explained that the Town uses in-house forces for engineering so there is no cost associated with writing bid specifications. Additionally, Town forces can adjust to conditions while on the road better than a contractor. The Department has managed the level of work being discussed in house before and there is no expectation that they will be monitoring the City or Groton Long Point projects.

Councilor Johnson would like Public Works to do all of the road work for the three entities.

Town Manager Oefinger noted that Scenario #1 is a baseline only and has nothing to do with what the actual needs of the three entities. There were many discussions during the budget process, but the Town is not trying to change or dictate how roads get paved in the City or Groton Long Point. This is an attempt to put a multi-year plan in place.

Councilor Watson noted that it is hard to determine the cheapest and most efficient way to do all of the road projects since the Council is not comparing apples to apples.

The Town Manager explained that under Scenario #2, it would take 10 years to bring all roads above 70 PCI, which would be two five-year funding cycles. The bottom line numbers do not include financing costs. Also, there would be variations each year in the amount of money spent (depending on the projects) and therefore varying financing costs.

Mr. Schneider described the basis for the percentages applied to the estimates. The Town uses state-inspected and certified asphalt plants.

Councilor Streeter asked if an inflation factor was included for contractual labor and Mr. Schneider stated no. It is not known if the City does engineering in house or contracts for the service. Councilor Streeter would feel more comfortable knowing the length of roads to be completed. The Town Manager explained that the ordinance will have to include some definition of what roads will be included or make reference to the MACTEC report, but there must be some flexibility. There will also be additional discussions about process and managing cash flow since all of the money cannot be bonded up front.

Councilor Flax feels the roads should be identified first so that the number can be determined. Town Manager Oefinger explained that all three entities have bought into the methodology laid out in the MACTEC report. There will be a list of roads, but things change over time and there must be flexibility, especially in later years. The cost is determined by the PCI level at which the Council wants to maintain the roads. Once a level and the associated costs are determined, the roads will be identified.

After further discussion, the consensus of the Committee was to support Scenario #2 at \$10,893,514.

2012-0170 Setting Public Hearing Date on an Ordinance for Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation

Tabled

2012-0171 Referral of Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Project to Planning Commission Under CGS 8-24

Tabled

2010-0084 High School Water Infiltration Issues

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger provided an update on the high school water infiltration issues. A fix for one type of window involves removing the glass, resealing it and reinstalling it. Some breakage is expected and additional window panes have been ordered. After numerous field tests and engineering reports, a problem was identified with the decorative metal panels above the windows that were not fabricated correctly. With respect to the internal windows in the atrium space, it appears that the fix that will work is to cover the extruded metal areas with a cap glued in place. The intent is to have the work done this summer. The focus is on repairing the leaking windows and assuring a warranty on the remaining windows.

2012-0040 Town Council Goal Setting

Discussed

Councilors had no comment on the draft goals prepared by Mayor Somers.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Flax, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2009-0166 Townwide Police Assessment**Discussed**

Town Manager Oefinger reported that there were 11 responses to the RFP for the Townwide Police Assessment. The Town, City, and Groton Long Point reviewed the responses and selected Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). A meeting is scheduled tomorrow to review the scope of services and determine the final dollar amount of the contract. The cost is approximately \$38,000 for a 16 week effort. Discussion followed on potential delays and data collection/verification.

Mayor Somers asked that the Council be notified if information is not being provided to the consultant in a timely manner.

2012-0157 OpSail 2012 - Update**Discussed**

The Town Manager noted that the event on July 8th at the Shennecossett Yacht Club will be held from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. There is also an event that night at the Port 'n' Starboard at 6:00 p.m.

2012-0178 Economic Development Commission - Potential Work Program Items**Discussed**

Mayor Somers suggested that the Economic Development Commission review the Town's incentive program. She feels it is important to update the incentives to reflect current economic conditions and she would like to formally ask the Commission to look at the program and report to the Town Council. Councilors were asked to look at the current incentive program and make suggestions.

Town Manager Oefinger noted that there is a lot of research and information available on the subject. The Town's incentives are fairly limited.

Councilors were agreeable to asking the Economic Development Commission to investigate incentive alternatives and come back to the Council with suggestions. The Town Manager suggested an interim report be provided.

Councilor Johnson stated he would bring the Council's request to the next Economic Development Commission meeting.

7. Consideration of Committee Referral Items as per Town Council Referral List**Recommended for Deletion:**

2011-0231 Town Council Orientation

Recommended for Deletion

2012-0009 FYE 2013 Budget

Recommended for Deletion

2012-0034 FYE 2013 Budget Requests - City of Groton

Recommended for Deletion

2012-0035 FYE 2013 Budget Requests - Groton Long Point

Recommended for Deletion

2012-0079 October 2011 Revaluation - Update

Recommended for Deletion

2012-0099 FYE 2013 Proposed Budget Deliberations
Recommended for Deletion

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Streeter received a call from the chairman elect of the Poquonnock Bridge Fire District expressing an opposite view from the current chairman of the District with respect to consolidation.

Mayor Somers stated there will be a special meeting of the Committee of the Whole on June 19th.

With regard to the issues with the Mystic Streetscape Project, Mayor Somers proposed that the Council lease the Mystic Arts Center parking lot for six weeks and provide free, open parking to alleviate some of the impact. Encumbered funds are available. Mayor Somers feels this effort would show that that Council is hearing the merchants concerns and it would be a benefit to tourists and residents. The total dollar amount is close to \$50,000.

Town Manager Oefinger stated that he spoke with Karen from the Mystic Arts Center and Karen has reached out to her Board. The fee, which is seasonally based, would be \$7,953.54 for a week. This figure is based on gate revenues for the same time period last year.

The Town Manager stated that this expenditure would not have to go to the RTM since the funds would come from encumbered funds. The auditor has indicated that a similar expenditure of encumbered funds (for bus transportation for the OpSail 2012 event) is not a problem. If not used, the encumbered funds will be returned to the General Fund on June 30th.

Councilor O'Beirne feels the redirection of funds must go to the RTM since it is greater than \$10,000.

Councilor Flax supports the idea, but he would rather pay from the receipts rather than a flat amount. The Town Manager noted that the cost is based on an historical amount, and the lot may be used more if it is free.

Mayor Somers stated the intent would be to have the parking lot open during the road paving and through the end of July.

Councilor Peruzzotti asked how people could be prevented from parking there long term and Mayor Somers suggested that merchants could look out for that type of abuse.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Mayor Somers, to express support for an expenditure of up to \$50,000 to provide free parking at the Mystic Arts Center parking lot in downtown Mystic

Councilor Flax discussed limiting the time that people can park because he feels the free parking will be abused. Councilor Antipas does not feel this needs to go to the RTM based on the Charter. Discussion followed on the need for Town Council and RTM approval. Mayor Somers asked the Town Manager to seek an opinion from the Town Attorney. Councilor Johnson does not feel this will address the merchants' concern about equipment being downtown in July and August. The Town Manager stated that the intent is to pave by the end of June. Mayor Somers stated this item will be on the agenda for the June 19th special meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

The motion carried by the following vote:

In favor: 7 - Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Peruzzotti, Mayor Somers, Councilor Streeter, Councilor Watson

Opposed: 0

Abstain: 1 - Councilor O'Beirne

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Mayor Somers, to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.